

**A RESOLUTION ENCOURAGING TO END 128 YEARS OF WAR BETWEEN THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA AND THE HAWAIIAN KINGDOM**

**A Resolution of Witness**

Submitted by the Association of Hawaiian Evangelical Churches of the  
Hawai'i Conference United Church of Christ

1 **SUMMARY**

2  
3 This Resolution calls the United Church to actualize its historical commitment to justice and  
4 peace with the friendly Christian Hawaiian Kingdom nation whose constitutions are founded  
5 upon Christian values.  
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7 **BIBLICAL & THEOLOGICAL RATIONALE**

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9 In the beginning humans were created in the image of God and were called “good”. Thus, all  
10 humans were created equal. The call to justice by the prophets is God’s commandment to treat  
11 everyone justly by acting righteously.  
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13 God’s moral law, enshrined in the Ten Commandments, is eternal and unchanging. Our bible is  
14 built on it. These laws are God’s stated will, the way he wants his kingdom and his universe to  
15 operate. In order, for justice to prevail, human laws must mirror God’s law. Justice is to  
16 prescribe the right way, to do things in an appropriate way. Moses demonstrated this concept  
17 when he said, “You shall not show partiality in judgment; you shall hear the small and the great  
18 alike. You shall not fear man, for the judgment is God’s.” (Deuteronomy 1:17). Justice has to  
19 do with equity in judgment without regard for a person’s status. It is an equitable application of  
20 God’s moral law to all people without partiality. (Numbers 15:16). When we do not operate  
21 according to biblical standards, we have abandoned God’s moral law, so every man does what is  
22 right in his own eyes (Judges 21:25).  
23

24 Jesus came to proclaim liberty and freedom to announce God’s justice being satisfied through  
25 what he called, “the favorable year of the Lord”, Old Testament Year of Jubilee. It was when  
26 God set society back in order. According to Leviticus 25:8-9, Israel could not have Jubilee until  
27 the people first observed the Day of Atonement. They could not have true justice on the human  
28 level until they got right with God on the vertical level. Social justice will not be complete until  
29 the people in a society, even the Church, get right with God. It is bringing the presence, precepts,  
30 and power of God to bear on society, pulling society back in an upright position.  
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32 **HISTORICAL GROUNDING**

33  
34 Responding to the wish of Henry Opukahaia<sup>1,iii</sup> but burdened with the false ideology of White  
35 Supremacy, missionaries of the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Mission  
36 (ABCFM) were sent to Hawaii arriving in 1820 (201 years ago).

37  
38 Rev. Rufus Anderson<sup>viii</sup> attempted to correct the evils of White Supremacy and advocated for a  
39 Hawaiian-led and Hawaiian-run church during his visit to the Hawaiian Kingdom in 1863.

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41 In 1893, descendants of missionaries led the illegal overthrow of the Hawaiian Kingdom.

42  
43 President Paul Sherry traveled to Hawaii and on January 17, 1993, the 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the  
44 overthrow of the Hawaiian Kingdom government, apologized to the Hawaiian people at  
45 Kaumakapili Church <sup>xii</sup>. This apology was cited in Public Law 103-150 signed by President  
46 William Clinton on November 23, 1993<sup>xiii</sup>.

47  
48 Given the present COVID-19 pandemic and the institutional racism seen recently, the “God is  
49 Still Speaking” church, the United Church of Christ, is challenged to actualize its struggle to  
50 fulfill the principle of justice and reconciliation within the United Church of Christ. 128 years of  
51 war crimes continues to target and violate Christian Hawaiian citizens in Hawaiian Kingdom  
52 territory and abroad which amount to a colossal scale of humanitarian and human rights  
53 violations daily.

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55 **TEXT OF THE MOTION**

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57 **WHEREAS**, Henry Opukahaia is known as the missionary from the Hawaiian Kingdom that  
58 encouraged American missionaries to arrive in Hawaii<sup>i</sup>, <sup>ii</sup>, and

59  
60 **WHEREAS**, the first Christian nation in the Pacific, the Hawaiian Kingdom constitution in 1840  
61 began with a quote from the Bible “God hath made of one blood all nations of men, to dwell on  
62 the face of the earth in unity and blessedness.”<sup>iii</sup>, <sup>iv</sup>, <sup>v</sup>, and

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64 **WHEREAS**, on December 19, 1842, United States President John Tyler agreed to recognize the  
65 independence of the Hawaiian Kingdom<sup>vi</sup>; and

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67 **WHEREAS**, the Christian Hawaiian Kingdom through treaties with friendly nations around the  
68 world, successfully modernized Hawaiian self-governance at the time to prosper in peace, trade  
69 and friendship through treaties with friendly nations around the world for fifty years<sup>vii</sup>; and

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71 **WHEREAS**, Rev. Rufus Anderson, the author of the three-self method (self-supporting, self-  
72 governing and self-propagating) and the long-term secretary of the ABCFM (American Board of  
73 Commissioners for Foreign Mission) arrived in Hawai‘i in 1863 to tell the missionaries to create  
74 self-reliant, self-governing churches and “to devolve upon it (the Hawaiian churches) the  
75 responsibilities of self-government in ecclesiastical matters.”<sup>viii</sup>, and

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77 **WHEREAS**, Rev. Anderson’s advice was not followed and the government of the Hawaiian  
78 Kingdom was overthrown on January 17, 1893<sup>ix</sup>, and

79  
80 **WHEREAS**, on December 18, 1893, President Grover Cleveland’s executive agreement to  
81 restore the Christian Hawaiian Kingdom was signed by Liliuokalani and received by U.S.  
82 ambassador Albert Willis<sup>x</sup>, and

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**WHEREAS**, in 1991, the Eighteenth General Synod of the United Church of Christ directed President Paul Sherry to issue an apology on the 100th anniversary of the overthrow of the Hawaiian monarchy for the complicity of the church in the overthrow<sup>xi, xii</sup>, and

**WHEREAS**, in 1993 President Clinton, with senators and representatives from Hawaii, signed Public law 103-150 apologizing for the United States role in the illegal occupation<sup>xiii</sup>, and

**WHEREAS** the National Lawyers Guild recommended to the Governor of the State of Hawaii “to begin to comply with international humanitarian law in its prolonged and illegal occupation of the Hawaiian Islands.”<sup>xiv</sup>

**WHEREAS**, the United Church of Christ has historically stressed the importance of Justice as a key faith component for the Church, and

**WHEREAS**, the correction of injustices depends upon correct history based upon factual matters, and history is often based upon who writes the history and factual information available, and

**WHEREAS**, the information included in this resolution will be available at <https://ahecchurch.weebly.com/> about the founding of the Hawaiian Kingdom to correct false history about the Christian Hawaiian Kingdom, and

**WHEREAS**, various General Synods of the United Church of Christ have taken proactive stands on Justice; and

**WHEREAS** justice depends upon action, not just stating what is true and just and right (pono in Hawaiian),

**THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED**, that the Thirty-Third General Synod of the United Church of Christ calls upon all settings of the church, denomination officers, conferences, associations, and congregations to live into the 1993 Apology of the United Church of Christ delivered to the Native Hawaiian People by President Paul Sherry.

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED**, that we call upon the United Church of Christ’s General Counsel’s office to listen to and consider recommendations from the Association of Hawaiian Evangelical Churches, other Native Hawaiian organizations and Native Hawaiian voices drafting communications to local, national and international leaders and organizations calling for compliance with international humanitarian law and an end to the illegal occupation of the Hawaiian islands.

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED**, the Thirty-Third General Synod of the United Church of Christ reaffirm its commitment to stand alongside and in support of the efforts of Native

126 Hawaiians to seek redress and restitution for the war crimes of the US against the Hawaiian  
127 Kingdom including, but not limited to, the crime of denationalization.

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129 **BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED** that the United Church of Christ Board will provide the Thirty-  
130 Fourth General Synod of the United Church of Christ with a written and oral update on the  
131 progress on the implementation of this resolution.

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134 **FUNDING:** The funding for the implementation of the Resolution will be made in accordance  
135 with the overall mandates of the affected agencies and the funds available.

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137 **IMPLEMENTATION:** The Officers of the Church, in consultation with appropriate ministries  
138 or other entities within the United Church of Christ, will determine the implementing body.

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<sup>i</sup> Papa Makua Wendell Davis 6th generation descendant of Henry Opukahaia

<sup>ii</sup> Spencer, Aida Bescon. “How Gods Spirit Worked a Revolution in Hawaii in 1819-1825.” *Pricilla Papers* 19, no. 3 (Summer 2005): 5-11. [https://www.cbeinternational.org/sites/default/files/pp193\\_2hgsuarihi1819.pdf](https://www.cbeinternational.org/sites/default/files/pp193_2hgsuarihi1819.pdf)

<sup>iii</sup> 1840 Constitution of the Hawaiian Kingdom,” Wikipedia, July 14, 2020, [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/1840\\_Constitution\\_of\\_the\\_Hawaiian\\_Kingdom](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/1840_Constitution_of_the_Hawaiian_Kingdom).

<sup>iv</sup> <https://www.hawaii-nation.org/constitution-1840.html>

<sup>v</sup> <http://hooilina.org/cgi-bin/journal?e=d-0journal--00-0-0-004-Document---0-1--1en-50---20-frameset-search-issue--001-0110escapewin&a=p&p=frameset&d=HASH0166acfd8ec6df2fa38fd161.5.2.3>

<sup>vi</sup> International Treaties,” Hawaiian Kingdom Government, accessed December 13, 2020, <https://www.hawaiiankingdom.org/treaties.shtml>.

<sup>vii</sup> International Treaties,” Hawaiian Kingdom Government, accessed December 13, 2020, <https://www.hawaiiankingdom.org/treaties.shtml>.

<sup>viii</sup> Rufus Anderson, *A Heathen Nation Evangelized: A History of the Sandwich Islands Mission* (London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1872), 284

<sup>ix</sup> Sally Merry, *Colonizing Hawaii* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2000), 35.

<sup>x</sup> The Hawaiian Kingdom Blog,” National Lawyers Guild Calls Upon State of Hawai’i to Comply with International Law of Occupation, November 12, 2020, <https://hawaiiankingdom.org/blog/national-lawyers-guild-calls-upon-state-of-hawaii-to-comply-with-international-law-of-occupation/>

<sup>xi</sup> Charles McCollough, “Why Our Church Apologized to Hawaii,” Why our church apologized To Hawai’i, December 13, 2020, [https://d3n8a8pro7vhmx.cloudfront.net/unitedchurchofchrist/legacy\\_url/11261/mccollough.pdf?1418437063](https://d3n8a8pro7vhmx.cloudfront.net/unitedchurchofchrist/legacy_url/11261/mccollough.pdf?1418437063)

<sup>xii</sup> [http://rescarta.ucc.org/jsp/RcWebImageViewer.jsp?doc\\_id=8abee2f6-352d-48f9-958b-49a311bc4489/ucoc0000/UD000001/00000019](http://rescarta.ucc.org/jsp/RcWebImageViewer.jsp?doc_id=8abee2f6-352d-48f9-958b-49a311bc4489/ucoc0000/UD000001/00000019)

<sup>xiii</sup> 103d Congress Joint Resolution, “Public Law 103-150,” Statute-107-Pg 1510, November 23, 1993, <https://www.govinfo.gov/content/pkg/STATUTE-107/pdf/STATUTE-107-Pg1510.pdf>

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<sup>xiv</sup> Sai, Dr. Keanu. “National Lawyers Guild Calls Upon State of Hawai‘i to Comply with International Law of Occupation.” *Hawaiian Kingdom Blog*, November 12, 2020. <https://hawaiiankingdom.org/blog/national-lawyers-guild-calls-upon-state-of-hawaii-to-comply-with-international-law-of-occupation/>